1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

then the other, and finally retained only two light switches of cassowary feathers. The catalogue of victims seemed inexhaustible. The sweat was pouring down Handaupa's lined old face, his voice was hoarse, and he was shaking with exhaustion and excitement. He paused to drink from a coco-nut and went on again, but just as his emotions seemed to be getting the better of him entirely, he suddenly said he must stop as he was tired, and with that he sank abruptly into a sitting position, and drained another coco-nut which one of the spectators held ready for him.

The third *aguma* was a very aged man from the neighbourhood of Divina Kovari. Feebler than Handaupa, he had a better memory, and was not so ambitious as to begin with the two weighty bundles of *otobu*. He was supported on either side by a younger man, and further assisted himself with a stick, but even his footsteps quickened as he warmed to his work and recounted the exploits of his youth and named his five victims.

The *aguma* exhorts the *ebamei* to bravery, and the reason for telling of his own prowess is to give them something to emulate. Such a demonstration, I understand, always marks the ceremony of investiture with the *otobu*. It is typical of a savage people to whom valour or mere bloodthirstiness is one of the first virtues. The Orokaiva is not only brave enough but exceedingly vainglorious: he loves to make a great show of martial prowess. It is interesting to note that this, like other ceremonies, has a sort of ambivalence, wavering between belief and make-believe, or between seriousness and banter. While the distinguished warrior is shouting his exploits, a chorus of young men stand by beating their drums and making fun of the old man in their songs. I have recorded one of the songs appropriate to the occasion:

Poponi opi be kajari keko

which means that the old *aguma* is a boaster and a liar, that he never thrust his spear through the body of a man, but merely poked him with a shoot (*opi*) of the *Poponi* tree.

When these lengthy declamations are over, several logs

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

536 brother, Evai. They all rush to the creek and rejoice to find that the mother has brought the baby round.

This incident, which must have happened some eighteen years ago (for Barari the baby is now a plantation boy), obviously held some farcical possibilities, and within the last few years was made the subject of a play by Evai, who is now the principal man of Poho. The mother and father of the child are dead, but the others survive. In the drama the parts of the above-named men and women were taken by four actors, and that of the baby by a wooden puppet.

536 522 I give another example which may be regarded as more typical. It was enacted at Deunia on the Kumusi, where I had the good fortune to see it. Many years ago when Kove, the present village constable of Deunia, was a little boy, he was sent one day to the gardens to gather wood. Approaching a sago-place he heard the sound of a man at work and paused a moment at the edge of the clearing, where he witnessed an occurrence which eventually became the theme of a play. Bigaba, a man of Deunia, was at work scraping the sago log, while his wife, Warari, seemed to be pestering him with amorous advances. At first Bigaba roughly rejected them, but gradually his manner changed, and finally Kove observed the couple in the act of sexual intercourse. All this he told of in the village, and it became a standing joke of which Bigaba and his wife were probably not unaware.

It was probably fifteen or twenty years after that the drama which I witnessed was played. The part of Bigaba was taken by Kove himself, who was a particularly clever buffoon, and hugely amusing to the spectators; that of the woman Warari by a young man; and that of Kove by a little boy, who played the part of Peeping Tom, with a bundle of sticks balanced on his head, as Kove carried a bundle of firewood fifteen years before. The oddest feature of all is that both Bigaba and his wife, now old people, witnessed the performance. It was by chance rather than intent, I fancy, that as Kove (in the character of Bigaba) went dancing off at the close of the drama, he encountered the real Bigaba face to face, almost indeed colliding with him.

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

Bigaba, who, whatever his feelings, wore an imperturbable countenance, stepped aside, but Kove met the situation by swinging a terrific blow at him with the long digging-stick he was carrying. The pole missed the old man's head by inches and met the ground with such force as to be shattered to pieces. After this improvisation, which earned him a parting roar of laughter, the clown went off, alternately shambling and bounding, to change his costume in the bush.

The following brief abstracts will help to give a general idea of the drama. I have actually seen only Nos. 7 and 8; the others were described to me.[1] It may be noted that there are two kinds of actors, the *buvivi*, whose parts are attractive, and the *samuna*, whose parts are at once comical and ugly.

No. 1. 'Totoima.'

Totoima was a man-monster who, in the early days, used to slaughter the Orokaiva. He was armed with tusks which, at the end of his day's work of killing, he would take out and sharpen. He was invincible until one day two youths secured these tusks which he had left aside while he bathed in the river. The youths had previously prepared a pig-trap, *bage* (see p. 48), and now pursued by Totoima, who is anxious to regain his teeth, they lead him on to the *bage* and throw them into it. Totoima blunders in after them and is caught. In the drama a pig-trap is erected in the village. Totoima (*samuna*) appears holding in his mouth the common two-tusk ornament (see p. 39). The boys obtain this from him and after a long pursuit throw it into the pig-trap, which collapses upon Totoima as soon as he enters it.

No. 2. 'Orehaha and the Drum.'

The Orokaiva did not know of the drum and *hui* (see pp. 86, 88) until they obtained them from Orehaha, the carpet snake. Orehaha used to beat the drum and blow the *hui* and, when the people came to discover the cause of the noise, would retire out of sight. This went on until they set a small boy to spy. He revealed the whereabouts of Orohaha,

[1] Another thoroughly typical example will be found in *Annual Report*, 1914–15, p. 14.

3: Reay E-4, 5 (1951) 1953 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

child's teeth tickled her in their tentative exploring. All these mothers laughed at the infants, with comments signifying, " He is not content to drink my milk ; he wants to eat me, too."

When the baby learns to walk, even if he is still unsteady on his feet, he ceases to be *meni orosati* and is known as *meni isapa* until he is about eight or nine years old. He stays at home with his older siblings while his mother goes to the garden, but she does not stay there all day now. She leaves the village quite early in the morning and returns to prepare a midday meal. As soon as the child is able to walk with his mother without impeding her progress, he goes to the garden with her. As he grows older, he plays with the other children in the gardens and may help his mother a little. Children of two or three years eat solid foods, mainly taro, but they still suckle. If they hang around their mother, except to approach the breast, she scolds them and makes them go away. Sometimes, if she is busy or does not want to sit down, she refuses them the breast. They go to their father, who spends much of his time sitting on the ground talking with the other men. The father takes the child between his legs, delouses his head affectionately, and holds him in his arms. It is always to the father that the child, especially the male child, runs for comfort.

The *meni isapa*, particularly at the age of two or three years, are the butt of jokes from the grown men, who frighten them by making strange noises and lungeing threateningly in their direction then laughing loudly as they watch the children cry, register bewilderment and run to their fathers. When their initial terror is overcome, the children learn to laugh at their own fright. This happens continually, until the child learns not to be afraid, imitates the men's frightening noises and grins back at them cheekily. All this is accepted by the women, who make no attempt to shield their children from experiencing such frights. If the men are her kinfolk, or friends of her husband or brother, the mother will join in with their raucous laughter. If they are strangers, she will take no notice of the incident. This frightening of small boys (*meni isapa*) is deliberate. Sometimes little girls are frightened incidentally at the same time, but no one takes much notice of this. Men do not go out of their way o frighten the little girls.

From about nine years till initiation at fifteen or sixteen, the child is known as *meni dombo*, or " big boy " (female, *meni kakara dombo*). I know very little about the *meni dombo*, either male or female. Married women among the Orokaiva are alarmed by the behaviour of the *meni kakara dombo*, who approach men casually to demand cigarettes and to talk freely about sexual matters in a joking way. This suggests that parents probably exercised more control in former times over the older children.

In Orokaiva childhood there are at least two conflict situations. At teething, the infant learns that he must not bite the mother's breast. Biting is accorded the immediate punishment of physical blows and unfeeling laughter at the child's expense. A three years old boy wanted to suckle and was kept waiting by his mother, who told him that she was busy and that he was getting too old to suckle anyway. He retaliated by biting her breast, but she hit him, scolded him and chased him away,